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MADRAS ALLAHABAD CALCUTTA COLOMBO



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# The Indian Interpreter

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

**The League of Peace**

‘[N order to promote international co-operation and to secure international peace and security by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war; by the prescription of open, just, and honourable relations between nations; by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments; and by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another, the Powers signatory to this Covenant adopt this Constitution of the League of Nations.’ That forms the preamble to the Covenant of Peace upon which the nations of the world are entering. In the ancient legend of the Flood that overwhelmed the world we are told that at the last, when hope was beginning to dawn again Noah, sent forth a dove from the ark and presently his messenger returned across the waste of troubled waters, bearing in its beak an olive leaf. The tempests still threaten to destroy the world. It may be, we say still, that the gulfs will wash us down. It may be, but there is a dawn of hope. God, according to the old tale, made in that hour of deliverance a covenant with man and set ‘His bow in the cloud’ as a token of His good will. The promise of the League of Nations is our ‘bow set in the clouds,’ bidding us not despair. The nations are entering upon what President Wilson calls ‘a covenant of fraternity and of friendship.’ They have called it a covenant—a word full of clean and brotherly significance, a word precious to the Christian, because the old Covenant and the New sum up the whole record, as he believes, of how

God has come for man's deliverance. So we trust and believe that God is a partner with the nations in this new resolve by His help to establish justice in the world and to make an end of war. This covenant recognizes that the supreme interest of the world is the identification of peace with justice. Further, 'the high contracting parties undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all states, members of the League.' But perhaps most significant of all is the solemn recognition of the supreme demand of duty as between the more advanced and powerful peoples and those that yet lag far behind. 'The well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization, and securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in the constitution of the League.' Have we come to a turning point in the world's history or is this only one more to be added to the visions fond and fugitive that have so often deceived and disappointed men? The event lies, not 'on the knees of the gods', but on the knees and in the hearts of men. 'On earth peace,' said the song of the angels, 'among men of good will.' If the good will be lacking, fine words will not avail. The Covenant, if it is to bring a new and better world, must be such a one as the old prophet saw God making with His children. 'This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts and in their hearts will I write it; and I will be their God and they shall be my people.'

From the churning of the Sea of Milk there flowed forth both nectar and deadly poison. The poison, the old story says, would have overflowed and destroyed the world had not Siva drunk it up, as all may see by the dark stain upon his throat. 'Many terrible things have come out of this war,' said President Wilson at Paris, 'but some very beautiful things have come out of it.' Most beautiful especially is this promise of peace which we welcome with hearts of thankfulness and hope. But at the same time the poison of Bolshevism is bringing destruction to great regions of the world. Who will interpose and save the race of men from ruin? The one cure for this disease is justice between class and class and man and man. The root of the old wars was mostly mutual fear between the nations and mutual distrust. And it is an atmosphere of distrust that breeds this new and still more desperate war. The dread of starvation is

**The disease of  
Bolshevism**



one of the most powerful of human motives and from it there seems to spread in an instant a fierce contagion of madness. Men are reduced to their primitive elements and each one becomes a wolf to his neighbour. Thus fear seems to be one of the main causes of this epidemic and its cure will come when fear is exorcised. An order of society based upon mutual confidence, with each member assured of a proper share of those things that go to make up a good life—such an order of society should be proof against the assaults of Bolshevism. It is those peoples that have been deceived and that feel themselves cruelly disillusioned—Russia and Germany—among whom this bacillus finds it easiest to multiply. Disappointed and distrustful peoples, those among whom fear and bitterness prevail, are the most liable to the contagion, and Governments, alike East and West, may well take warning from these facts and seek to have their rule established in the hearts of their people. Burke said of the French in 1790 what can be repeated with emphasis of the Bolsheviks, that ‘they have shown themselves the ablest architects of ruin that have hitherto existed in the world.’ Another sentence of this wise political thinker, uttered at the same time, deserves to be pondered deeply by all who have the guidance of states. ‘Wherever a separation is made,’ he wrote, ‘between liberty and justice, neither is safe.’ Let the Government of India reflect that true justice can never be established in any nation except on a foundation of liberty, the free acceptance of the laws by the people. And so also the Bolsheviks have to learn that there can be no liberty apart from justice. Apart from justice and honour what calls itself liberty is ‘red ruin and the breaking up of laws.’

We may call it a materialistic view that maintains that the greatest benefactor of his kind is he who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before, but all idealism that is other than a deceiving dream will take account of certain fundamental human needs. ‘The feel of the spade in the hand,’ says the Irish peasant, ‘is no different for all your talk.’ Hunger and toil and the burden of mortality are more immediate and insistent facts at the present, time than questions of self-government or communal representation. It is not easy to lift up one’s eyes and view life steadily and whole when fears beset one on every hand, when hunger is a cruel reality of every day as it is to so many at this time. Man does not live by bread alone, but he does live by bread, and the

## The banishing of fear

hungry peasant may well say that political controvesy bakes no bread. Preoccupation with engrossing physical cares inevitably narrows men's thoughts and dwarfs their souls. The plight of the multitudes in this land who have this year to leave house and home and go out wandering across the bare, brown wastes, seeking work and food, who see their cattle upon which their future living so much depends, lying down to die, who have no assurance to-day of to-morrow's bread, their plight is one in which there is little room for 'nobler loves and nobler cares.' No people should have to live through such haunted days. What men everywhere, West and East, whether by strikes or by the dumb gestures of their souls, are demanding is the right to the good life, and if social adjustment and industrial organization can bring that nearer, these things must be taken in hand. But the lurking shadows of the mind can be dispelled by nothing less than the faith that leads men to God the Father. That is why the discovery of that road is after all, whether for India or for any other land, the ultimate and crowning good.

#### INSATIATE

The more I win Thee, Lord, the more for Thee I pine.  
Ah such a heart is mine.

My eyes behold Thee and are filled, and straightway then  
Their hunger wakes again !

My arms have clasped Thee and should set Thee free, but no,  
I cannot let Thee go.

Thou dwell'st within my heart. Forthwith anew the fire  
Burns of my soul's desire.

Lord Jesus Christ, Beloved, tell, O tell me true,  
What shall Thy servant do ?

(Translated from REV. N. V. TILAK's, *Abhanganjali*.)

## REPENTANCE AS ILLUSTRATED FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT PSALMS AND FROM THE VARUNA HYMNS OF THE RIG-VEDA

By the Rev. H. D. Griswold, Ph.D.

BY repentance is meant in general the regret which one often feels for having done wrong, together with any purpose after new obedience which may be formed in connexion with such regret. One of the best definitions that I know of repentance is found in the *Westminster Confession's Shorter Catechism*, question 87. In answer to the question 'What is repentance unto life?' we read: 'Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.' An analysis of this definition of repentance will throw a strong clear light upon the nature of repentance.

We notice in the first place that repentance involves on the part of the sinner '*a true sense of his sin*'. How vitally important it is to understand the real nature of sin, as something which God hates, and which can, therefore, destroy man's fellowship with God. Sin is not to be regarded as mere human frailty and so unworthy of serious attention, because all men participate in it more or less. Nor is sin, as some hold, merely an incident in the process of evolution—good in the making, as it were. Such explanations of the nature of sin are utterly out of harmony with the testimony of every awakened conscience. Let me cite a few illustrations of how sin is conceived by the awakened as committed against God and as an abominable thing in the sight of God. Joseph, the Patriarch, when a young man in Egypt, was terribly tempted to the sin of impurity. With a true sense of sin in his heart and with these words upon his lips, 'How can I

do this great wickedness and sin against God? '1 he overcame the temptation. And in the fifty-first Psalm a true sense of sin is expressed in the following words :

I know my transgressions ;  
And my sin is ever before me.  
Against thee, thee only have I sinned,  
And done that which is evil in thy sight.

A similar sense of sin may also be illustrated from the second and third stanzas of R.V. vii. 86 :

2. With mine own heart I meditate this question ;  
With Varuṇa when shall I be united ?  
What gift of mine will he unangered welcome :  
When shall I happy-hearted see his mercy ?
3. Wishing to know my sin I make enquiry,  
I go about to all the wise and ask them ;  
With one accord they gave to me this answer ;  
'Tis Varuṇa, whose wrath is hot against thee.

Such is the testimony of every one, who has been convicted in respect of sin, and who accordingly has a true sense of sin. But sin as committed against God and as that abominable thing which God hates, involves also *separation* from God. It was Peter, who, on attaining to 'a true sense of his sin,' fell down at Jesus' knees, saying: 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.' 2 The sense of separation from God on account of sin comes out strikingly in several Vedic passages. For example, in the stanzas already quoted there occurs the question :

With Varuṇa when shall I be *united* ?

That is, when shall I be restored again to the fellowship of Varuṇa, which has been broken by sin? And in one of the choicest and most inspired hymns to Varuṇa the sage Vasistha is represented as recalling sadly his former fellowship with Varuṇa which had been broken by sin :

What has become of this our ancient friendship,  
When without enmity we walked together ;  
And when I, Varuṇa, to thy lofty castle,  
Thy thousand-gated dwelling, had admittance ?

Thus 'a true sense of sin' involves the knowledge that sin is committed against God, that sin is an abomination in the sight of God, and that the natural consequence of sin is separation from God, with all that involves of loss and pain. And notice

1 Gen. xxxix. 9.

2 Luke v. 8.



that just as sin is committed against God, even so true repentance is 'repentance toward God'.<sup>1</sup> It is not repentance toward an impersonal law of right; it is repentance toward the living God, whose holy will has been transgressed, and whose love has been set at naught.

But, in the second place, repentance involves 'apprehension,' on the part of the sinner, 'of the mercy of God in Christ.' The doctrine of repentance involves the doctrine of the grace and mercy of God. The idea of repentance has as its correlative the idea of a God who is merciful and gracious. Such is the teaching throughout the Bible. The cry of the Psalmist is: 'Have *mercy* upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness; according to the multitude of Thy *tender mercies* blot out my transgressions.'<sup>2</sup> The cry of the publican in the parable is: 'God be merciful to me, a sinner.'<sup>3</sup> And in another place we read: 'God, being *rich in mercy*, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead throughout trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by *grace* have ye been saved).' Notice the key-words 'mercy' and 'grace'. The doctrine of the grace of God receives also a fair emphasis in the Varuṇa hymns of the Rig-Veda. 'O Lord, have *mercy* and forgive' is the refrain in R.V. VII. 89. In a passage already quoted the poet asks:

When shall I happy-hearted see his mercy?

and again in the same hymn:

Slave-like will I, when once my sin is pardoned,  
Serve him the *merciful*, ere while the angry.<sup>4</sup>

In R.V. VII. 87 there is reference to

The king of all that is, whose sway is boundless,  
Who showeth *mercy* even to the sinner.

And this is followed by the aspiration:

O that we might in Varuṇa's eyes be guiltless.

Such then are the two fundamental conditions of repentance—a true sense of one's own sin and an apprehension of the mercy of God—witnessed to both by the Bible and by the Varuṇa hymns of the Rig Veda. The twofold vision is necessary, the vision of one's own sin in all its naked enormity, and the vision of a gracious and merciful God. Without the vision of the grace of God the vision of one's own sin is sometimes so blasting and terrible as to lead to utter hopelessness and even to self-destruction. It

<sup>1</sup> Acts xx, 21.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xviii, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. li, 1.

<sup>4</sup> R.V. VII. 86.

was Judas, the betrayer of innocent blood, whose remorse was so terrible that he went out and hung himself. And every one whom the Holy Spirit has convicted in respect of sin knows something of the shame and agony of mind which accompanies the awakening to a true sense of sin. How unspeakably important then is the doctrine of the grace and mercy of God ?

In the third place repentance involves grief and hatred of sin. This is the element of regret in repentance. It is expressed by the English word *repentance*, the regret which follows the doing of evil, and by the Sanskrit word *Pascāttāp* which means the same thing, the after-grief. And, mind you, it is 'grief and hatred of sin' itself and not merely of the consequences of sin. As some one has said, true repentance 'hates the sin, and not simply the penalty.' Show me a man whose primary aim is to get rid of penalty, and I will show you one whose repentance is not deep. Simon, the sorcerer, was sternly rebuked by the Apostle Peter for blasphemously trying to purchase the gift of God's Holy Spirit with money. 'Repent therefore of this thy wickedness,' said Peter to him, 'and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee.'<sup>1</sup> And Simon's answer was: 'Pray ye for me to the Lord, that none of the things which ye have spoken come upon me.'<sup>2</sup> The sorcerer's primary aim was not to get rid of sin, but to get rid of penalty. How different was the attitude of the prodigal son in the parable, whose confession was: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight; I am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants.'<sup>3</sup> He was ready to suffer the penalty of his sin by giving up his position as a son and taking the place of a servant. True repentance feels the defilement of sin. Its language is the language of Job: 'I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.'<sup>4</sup> Its language is the language of the Psalmist: 'Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. . . . Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. . . . Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.'<sup>5</sup>

Now in regard to those hymns of the Rig-Veda which reveal the fullest consciousness of sin, namely, the Varuṇa hymns, it must be admitted that the emphasis, on the whole, is placed upon the removal of penalty rather than upon the removal of the inward defilement of sin.

<sup>1</sup> Act viii. 22.

<sup>2</sup> V. 24

<sup>3</sup> Luke xv. 18-19.

<sup>4</sup> Job. xiii. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. li. 2, 7, 10.

To illustrate :

If Varuṇa, a dear friend and companion,  
Such as I am of thine, have sinned against thee,  
May we not eat the fruit of our own doings. <sup>1</sup>

Again :

Whatever wrong against the race of gods we do,  
Being but men, O Varuṇa, whatever law  
Of thine we may have brok'n in thoughtlessness,  
For that transgression do not punish us, O God. <sup>2</sup>

Once more :

9. A hundred are thy remedies, a thousand,  
Wide be thy grace and deep, O sovereign ruler ;  
Drive far away from us death and destruction,  
And make us free from ev'n the sin committed.
11. This I implore of thee with prayer adoring,  
Thy suppliant asks for this with his oblation ;  
O Varuṇa, stay here with us unangered,  
Far-famed one, of life do not deprive us.
14. O Varuṇa, we turn aside thine anger  
By prayers and sacrifices and oblations,  
Sage Asura, thou sovereign widely ruling,  
Release from us the sins we have committed.
15. O Varuṇa, release from us the fetter,  
The upper and the lower and the middle ;  
So may we in thy governance, Aditya,  
Belong to Aditi, when once made guiltless. <sup>3</sup>

You will notice that there is mentioned here the anger of Varuṇa on account of sin and the penalty of sin which Varuṇa imposes in the form of 'death and destruction'. The penalty or consequence of sin is conceived as a 'fetter' with which the sinner is bound, and the prayer is :

Release from us the sins we have committed,  
O Varuṇa, release from us the fetter.

Thus that which is emphasized in sin is what it entails of suffering and death. At the same time it is clear that the sin which fastens the fetter of 'death and destruction' upon the life of man also renders Varuṇa angry and destroys all fellowship with him.

Again in R.V. I. 25 : 1-2, 21, we have the same thought :

1. However much, god Varuṇa,  
We violate thine ordinance,  
Being but mortals, day by day ;

<sup>1</sup> R.V. VII. 88, 6.

<sup>2</sup> R.V. VII. 89, 5.

<sup>3</sup> R.V. I. 2, 4, 9, 11, 14, 15.

2. Yet give us not up to the stroke  
 Death-dealing of the angry one,  
 The wrath of the incensed one.
21. Unbind for us the highest bond,  
 The middle one untie for us,  
 The lowest, too, that we may live.

Here the normal penalty of sin is described as 'the stroke death-dealing of the angry one,' i.e., Varuṇa, the holy god, is angry at the one who violates his ordinances, and so fetters him with the bond of death. And the prayer to Varuṇa is that he unbind or release the threefold cord of death, 'that we may live.' In a word, Varuṇa is angry at sin, and punishes it with death. Compare 'The wages of sin is death.' The sinner appeals to the *grace* of Varuṇa, and prays that his life may not be cut off in the midst of the years by death. Here again the emphasis is placed on escape from the penalty of sin.

But in R.V. V. 85, 7-8, a higher note is struck :

7. Whatever sin against friend or companion,  
 We have committed or against a brother,  
 Against one's kinsman or against a stranger,  
 O Varuṇa, do thou forgive us all that.
8. If we have cheated at the dice when playing,  
 If witting or unwitting we have done wrong,  
 Cast all those sins away like loosened fetters,  
 And thy dear worshippers may we again be.

This passage is ethically and spiritually on a high level. Sin breaks off all fellowship with the holy Varuṇa. It alienates from God. And so the prayer is that whatever sins have been committed through lack of love or lack of honesty, Varuṇa would forgive them all and cast them all away 'like loosened fetters', that so sinners forgiven may again have fellowship with Varuṇa and engage in his worship.

One other passage may be quoted, namely, R.V. II. 28, 5-7, 9 :

5. As from a bond release me from transgression,  
 May we swell, Varuṇa, thy spring of order ;  
 May no thread break as I weave my devotion,  
 Nor mass of work before the time be shattered.
6. O Varuṇa, away from me put terror,  
 Accept me graciously, thou righteous ruler ;  
 Loose me from evil as a calf from halter,  
 Mine eyelids' master am I not without thee.



7. Smite us not, Asura, with those dread weapons,  
Which at thy bidding wound the evil-doer ;  
From light may we not go forth into exile ;  
Disperse, that we may live, all those who hate us.
9. Remove far hence the sins by me committed,  
Let me not eat the fruit of other's action ;  
Full many are the dawns that yet shall redden,  
O Varuṇa, place us alive among them.

As in the previous hymns, so here forgiveness is largely identified with the remission of penalty. The prayer is :

Smite us not, Asura, with those dread weapons,  
Which at thy bidding wound the evil doer.

The penalty of sin is conceived as a going away into exile 'where they never see the sun,' in other words, death. And so the prayer for forgiveness is also a prayer for long life :

Full many are the dawns that yet shall redden,  
O Varuṇa, place us alive among them.

So much for the third characteristic of true repentance, namely, 'grief and hatred of sin.' Sin involves inner defilement, separation from God, and penal results. The inward defilement of sin, i.e., its power to defile the conscience of the sinner, is well represented in the Old Testament penitential psalms, but is hardly referred to at least not explicitly in the Vedic penitential hymns. But the second and third things which sin involves, namely, separation from God and penal results, are well witnessed to in both the Hebrew and the Vedic penitential hymns. When the doctrine of *Karma* gained the supremacy in India, the doctrine of sin was confined almost entirely to the penal results of sin. This was to overlook the conception of sin as involving defilement of conscience and separation from God. To such inward defilement and separation from God the awakened conscience everywhere bears testimony, e.g., in Wesley's and Toplady's hymns :

Vile and full of sin I am,  
Thou art full of truth and grace.

And

Foul, I to the fountain fly ;  
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

True repentance, then, involves genuine 'grief and hatred of sin' as something which God hates, as that which defiles the spirit and separates from God, and as that which leads to death.



Have we felt genuine 'grief and hatred' for sin? Let us open our hearts and lives to the influence and tuition of the Spirit of God, whose work it is to 'convict in respect of sin;' and let us remember that true repentance 'hates the sin, and not simply the penalty; and it hates the sin most of all because it has discovered God's love' (Wm. M. Taylor).

In the fourth place, true repentance involves *a turning from sin unto God*. This aspect of repentance is expressed by the Greek work *metanoia* 'change of thought' and most excellently by the Arabic word *tauba* 'turning.' As compared with grief for sin the turning from sin unto God is the supreme thing. One may weep constantly over one's own sin, and yet it will be of no avail, unless one turns from sin unto God and by true repentance and faith gives God an opportunity to forgive sin and cleanse from all unrighteousness.

Could my zeal no respite know,  
 Could my tears forever flow,  
 All for sin could not atone;  
 Thou must save and thou alone.

On the other hand, we may have only a slight sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and yet if we are faithful to such sense of sin as we have, with true repentance turning from it unto God, then it will be well with us. Some one has said that 'True repentance consists in the heart being broken for sin and broken from sin' (Thornton). When we experience 'grief and hatred of sin,' then our heart is 'broken for sin.' When we 'turn from it unto God,' then our heart is 'broken from sin.' The supremely important thing is to turn from sin unto God. that so the redemptive and healing grace of God in Christ may do its saving work. Repentance as a change of mind and purpose and a turning unto God receives a large emphasis in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. John the Baptist began his ministry with the word, '*Repent* ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'<sup>1</sup> And with John the Baptist to repent meant to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. When John's voice was silenced, the Lord Jesus Christ took up the same word, '*Repent* ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'<sup>2</sup> With repeated and solemn insistence the Lord Christ said on another occasion: 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.'<sup>3</sup> And on the day of Pentecost when the people were 'pricked in their heart,' i.e., convicted

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iv. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xiii. 5.

of sin by the Holy Spirit under the preaching of Peter, and so cried out, 'What shall we do?' Peter's answer was: '*Repent* ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins.'<sup>1</sup> When Simon the sorcerer blasphemously tried to purchase the gift of God with money, Peter's word to him was '*Repent* of this thy wickedness.'<sup>2</sup> We have all, I suppose, been sorry on account of our sins. But have we turned from them unto God? Recall the solemn word: 'Except ye *repent*, ye shall all likewise perish.' The God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is a God of grace, 'not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to *repentance*.'<sup>3</sup> 'There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.'<sup>4</sup> In the Rig-Veda also there is, {for example, in the Varuṇa hymn R.V. (VII. 86, 7), an implicit of repentance, because the mercy of Varuṇa and his forgiving grace is there beautifully celebrated :

Slave-like will I, when once my sin is *pardoned*,  
Serve him, the *merciful*, erewhile the angry.

And in R.V. VII. 87, 7, we have the same implicit doctrine of repentance in words referring to Varuṇa :

Who showeth mercy even to the sinner,  
O that we might in Varuṇa's eyes be guiltless,  
The laws of Aditi fulfilling truly.

In the fifth place, true repentance, e.g., 'repentance unto life', as it is called, involves '*full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience*.' So Barnabas exhorted the young Christians of Antioch 'that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.'<sup>5</sup> So Daniel 'purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's dainties.'<sup>6</sup> So the prodigal son in the parable purposed a great purpose when he said: 'I will arise and go to my father.'<sup>7</sup> Such a purpose the Lord Jesus sought to evoke when he said to the man whom he had healed: 'Sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee.'<sup>8</sup> Such a purpose He sought to evoke, when He said to the sinful woman: 'Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.'<sup>9</sup> It is the 'full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.' Such a purpose

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 38.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xv, 10.

<sup>7</sup> John viii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Acts viii. 22.

<sup>5</sup> Acts xi. 23.

<sup>8</sup> John v. 14.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Dan. i. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Luke xv, 18.

is indicated in the splendid lines of the Rig Veda (VII, 86, 7) already quoted :

Slave-like will I, when once my sin is pardoned,  
Serve him, the merciful, erewhile the angry.

Thus we should live not in the domain of the feelings and emotions, but in the domain of the will, turning to God in penitence not because we feel like doing it, but because it is right, with 'purpose of heart', cleaving unto the Lord.

What then are the five things which 'repentance unto life' involves? It involves, first, a true sense of sin; secondly, apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ; thirdly, grief and hatred of sin; fourthly, a turning from it unto God; and, fifthly, full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience. Such is repentance unto life, which is called rightly 'a saving grace.' Have we thus repented? There is a 'godly sorrow,' which worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret. There is also 'the sorrow of the world' which 'worketh death.'

How necessary it is, then, that every human being should not only have 'a true sense of his own sin,' but also apprehend 'the mercy of God,' and let me add 'the mercy of God *in Christ*.' Let me speak boldly on this point. I can speak only the things which I have seen and heard, that is, the things which I have experienced at first hand. I know from personal experience that the sense of separation from God due to sin and the pain and agony of mind which accompany a true sense of sin may through apprehension of 'the mercy of God in Christ,' be transmuted into 'the peace of God which passeth all understanding.' This is a great positive fact of personal experience. I am not writing to controvert the opinions of others. That is too negative to be profitable. But I know experimentally of just one way of entering into the fellowship and peace of God, and that is through 'apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ;' and by faith getting into a vital relation with that mercy. What works for myself I can safely commend to others. The key to the need of others is one's own need. And whatever has been a profound blessing to one's self ought to be good tidings to others also. And so I recommend to you the Lord Jesus Christ; whose sacrificial life and sacrificial death are a real revelation of the mercy of God.

## THE VOCATION, HIGH CALLING AND RESPONSIBILITY OF CHRISTIAN TEACHERS

By M. Sanjiva Rau, B.A., L.T.

### I

THE leading idea of the great educationists is that the teachers' aim has to be the full development of the tripartite man; the powers of body, mind and spirit so harmoniously developed as to make our boys and girls *perfect*. Now this was the ideal of the Greek system of education. But will *that* ideal be considered satisfactory in the estimation either of St. Paul who also hungered to 'present every man perfect,' or of Jesus who also hungers to 'make every man perfect.' To make this point more explicit. Let us mark down a dozen perfect men and women whom the Greek system of education produced; let us also note down another half a dozen of perfect men and women whom we come across in the historical novels and dramas in English literature. Now let us bring Jesus and Paul into their company. How would they feel concerning this dozen perfect men? Would they be satisfied with them? What do you think? I think it is quite possible that they would feel that some significant thing is *missing* in the lives of this dozen; their life is not 'Life indeed'. They would tell them, 'You must be even as we are' (cf. Acts xxvi. 29). But then how would the dozen feel concerning Paul and Jesus? I think it is quite possible that they would feel that the two are very peculiar and irksome; that the *extra* thing in Jesus and Paul is just the thing that makes them eccentric. And the dozen would say, 'We do not want to be like that; we can be all right without that.'

Now, who would be right? Paul and Jesus? Or the dozen? And what is our aim as Christian teachers? Are we going to produce men and women to whom the company of Jesus and Paul is irksome, who say, 'The two are peculiar—the extra thing that they are, we indeed do not want to be? We need not be



that, in order to be right.' Or are we going to produce such men and women as Paul and Jesus had in view and would be content with? If we are Christian indeed we cannot rest content with the ideal of the Greek educationalist or the modern novelist and dramatist. Our aim is what Jesus and Paul would call perfect, what would satisfy *them*.

Such an ideal as Jesus and Paul had on behalf of the children of men, this ideal cannot begin to shine on our souls until we shall have gone through certain preliminaries. This preliminary thing is: soon or late we shall have already discovered the teacher's work to be literally a vocation unto us, a calling from on high, that we are teachers now and for good, not because we found better prospects in the teacher's line than elsewhere, not because we could be a success here rather than elsewhere, but because the Master from on high hath *called* us to this task, *appointed* us in this place, *given* us this work to do; and woe unto us if we say 'no' to Him. As we analyse the self-consciousness of Jesus and Paul, it is just *this* element that is fundamental to their life-ministry. 'The work which thou gavest me to do,' says Jesus, '*that* work, Father, I have finished.' 'The ministry that I hold,' says Paul, '*that* is God's mercy to me.' Yes, when like Jesus and Paul we shall have begun to recognize that, we hold on to our post, because we have been called to it, because it has been a trust given from on high, then the ideal which they had will begin to shine on our soul as well.

## II

What then is the ideal, the vision that Jesus followed? It is to be found in that memorable prayer recorded in John xvii. Here we notice Jesus pouring forth His whole heart thus: *Thee* the world hath not known, oh righteous Father, but *Thee* have I known—and declared unto these whom Thou gavest me and who now have come to know that I am from beside Thee. On their behalf, I have consecrated myself and they believe on Thee through me; and let them likewise be consecrated on behalf of the world, that it may believe on Thee through them.

Jesus means to say—because the Righteous Father is not known by the world, therefore it is that Jesus has consecrated himself on behalf of his pupils, who being filled with *His* knowledge of the Father are to be likewise consecrated on behalf of the world that it may believe on the Father through them. So then, Jesus' ideal, His *Vision* is—the Righteous Father



hitherto unknown by the world, unrecognized by the world, shall become known to and recognized by the world—the consecrated instruments thereof being Himself and His pupils.

Boys and girls come to us at an age when they are filled with an insatiable hunger, unconsciously storing up what in the near future will determine their life-choice and life-career; they are repeating in their hearts the two lines,

Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make *our* lives sublime;

and, according to Jesus, the teacher is he whose whole sphere of consecrated life and work, radiating the beauty of Divine Goodness, doth indeed compel the watchful pupils' reverent attention to the Unseen Righteous Father. The pupils at all times and in all places with a *dumb* voice ask, 'Show us the Righteous Father and we shall be satisfied.' According to Jesus the teacher is he whose life and work is radiant with the silent reply, 'Have I been so long with you? And have you not seen? Yea, you *have* seen.' The divine glory and presence has to be so visualized in the spiritual splendour of the teacher's everyday motives, aspirations and dispositions of heart, amidst the actual conditions and experiences of toil and pain, that the wondering pupils would desire to share his faith. The vision has to transform the pupils' life-choice and life-career with such a compelling power that the world on beholding these transformed personalities shall exclaim, 'What made this? 'Tis the God of the teacher.' Such is our vocation, such is the calling wherewith we Christian teachers have been called; such is our responsibility to God and man; such is our ideal.

Hence it is that, whereas to non-Christian teachers experience brings facility, a sense of mastery, self-confidence, self-satisfaction in their work, we, the Christian teachers, the more we enter into our profession the more are we cast down with an overwhelming sense not only of our insufficiency, but of our unworthiness. But then, it is in these times when we are cast down, that we discover our God lifting us up with His Word—which is the Bible.

### III

We notice in the Bible that the vocation, the high calling, the responsibility of the nation of Israel in relation to other nations is exactly the same as that of the Christian teacher to his pupils. '*You have I formed for myself, and you shall show forth*

my praise. *You* are the light of the world and the salt of the earth.' The children of Israel were to be so radiant with the divine glory and presence, so clothed in the beauty of pure goodness that the wondering nations would joyfully own allegiance to the God of Israel. Throughout the prophetic messages—their invitations, appeals, warnings—there breathes the same urgent jealous temper—'Despise not this vocation, despise not this high calling, despise not this glorious destiny.' It is not easy to read seriously through some of the prophetic writings without tears gathering in the eyes, especially when the reader recognizes that these writings are but the *conduct certificate* of the nation of Israel. The nation's heart beats in the writing; one can almost see the tears rolling down its cheeks, as it writes with its own hand this conduct certificate and gets it signed by Jehovah, for publication to all the nations of the world; a certificate which reads thus: 'Thus saith Jehovah—the God of Israel: This people has been altogether a stiffnecked and blinded race. How often I would, but these would not. They would not, although I have not rejected them altogether and have been saying to them: Return unto Me, and I return unto you, giving you back your vocation, your high calling, your glorious destiny'.

I said a little while ago that the Christian teacher's high calling is that his everyday motives, aspirations and dispositions of heart amidst the thousand common duties and burthens of life, are to be so radiant with the beauty of divine goodness, that the wondering pupils desire to share the teacher's faith. I also added that, as a consequence of this, whereas non-Christian teachers of advanced experience have a sense of mastery over their work, to the Christian teacher, on the other hand, the more he advances in experience the more overwhelming is his sense of not mere insufficiency but unworthiness too. For indeed he has to make an open confession that he has been altogether blinded—how often the Master would, but it is he that would not. But though we are cast down with this confession, we have the voice of Him that lifts us up saying, 'Return unto Me for I return unto you, giving you back your high calling, your glorious destiny.'

Finally, brethren let us remember that what we follow after is not a mere 'it'—an ideal howsoever grand; but it is a 'He' that we follow—the God who has called us and who, having called us is faithfully placing His heavenly treasure in our earthen vessel. Faithful is He that hath called us and He will

also perform. Let us dig deep into those words, 'As I hold this ministry by God's mercy to me, I never lose heart in it. The work which the Father has given me to do, that I am going to finish.' Let us be rid of all mere personal ambitions and the corresponding miseries of mortification; let us rest with all our weariness and unworthiness in Him who has called us, taking on Himself *His* responsibility to make the heavenly round that perfects the earthly. Let us learn what it means to pray thus :—

Therefore to whom turn we but to Thee, the ineffable Name ?

Builder and maker, Thou, of houses not made with hands !

What ! have fear of change from Thee, who art ever the same ?

Doubt that Thy love can fill the heart that Thy power expands ?

## RECENT IRISH POETRY

By Miss D. A. Lorimer, Bombay

FROM earliest times Ireland has produced dramatists but, until recent years, she has produced no national drama. The *idea* of a national theatre was conceived by Yeats, and about it he had distinct views of his own. Firstly, he maintained that the creation of beauty and truth were justified of themselves, and that their creation was of far greater service to the country than any other writing which, in seeming to serve a cause, compromised beauty and truth. The creation of beauty and truth then was Yeats' first aim in the Irish national drama. Further, he required in a play a stronger feeling for the beautiful and more appropriate language than are found in ordinary theatres. A king, a modern lover, or a tinker must speak—he maintains—the language which is his and nobody else's, and he must so speak it that the hearer cannot tell whether it is the thought or the form of words which has moved him—or whether, indeed, they can be separated at all. To aid these ideas the plays are produced with the simplest action, scenery and costume. Action indeed is reduced to a minimum.

In 1903 the Irish National Theatre Society was founded, and among the earliest productions were the first plays of Synge. The following year Miss Horniman, that splendid friend of the new dramatic movement, placed the Abbey Theatre in Dublin at the disposal of the Society, and that theatre is now identified with this interesting modern national theatre movement. The players who at first gave their services free are now paid, but this has brought with it no taint of commercialism. The players are still as truly inspired by a love of their art, and admiration for the writers, as when they first gave themselves for this new adventure. The National Theatre Society has succeeded beyond all hope, though not, I think, beyond its deserts. Its founder wrote proudly of it six years ago: 'We can say as the artist can in every other art, "We will give nothing that does not please



ourselves, and if you do not like it, and we are still confident that it is good, we will set it before you again, and trust to changing taste." All true arts, as distinguished from their commercial and mechanical imitations, are a festival where it is the fiddler who calls the tune.'

John Synge was the strongest man connected with the Irish National Theatre. He would have been a dramatist without the Irish National Theatre, but it is doubtful whether he would have found a sympathetic audience, indeed, an audience of any sort.

There is little that is striking in the life of Synge. He was born in Dublin, and he died there at the age of thirty-eight. But within that short space runs the story of how he found that his business was the drama, and his field Ireland. The creative part of his artistic life began late and only lasted some four or five years. He was late in finding himself and he had the wisdom to 'bide his time', for which we may for ever be thankful, as it has saved us the pain of reading any 'youthful efforts.'

Curiously enough he did start in the right field, but he turned his back on it and wandered far from the Wicklow hills.

I knew the stars, the flowers and the birds  
The grey and wintry sides of many glens  
And did but half remember human words,  
In converse with the mountains, moors and fens.

He graduated in Trinity College, Dublin, which, according to some 'withers all art,' then he left Ireland and forgot all the Gaelic he ever knew and sought for self expression in France, Germany and Italy, but found it not. At the same time Yeats was in Paris and there, by the happiest of so-called chances, Synge and he met. Yeats was also passing through a distinct stage in his development, and he too, was suffering from a reaction against the influences of the day, and seeking simpler methods. He had ventured into the mysterious and alluring paths of symbolism and had returned with much he had gained, but also with a new love for the sun and the air and the wind. So he gave Synge this piece of advice, which proved the making of Synge, 'Give up Paris, go to the Aran Islands. Live there as if you were one of the people themselves, express a life that has never found expression.' So Synge went to Aran, a group of rocky islands off the west of Ireland. He lived there the peasants' life, learned their language, and discovered his own capabilities. He saw life in vivid detail and seized instinctively all that would be useful to him as an artist.



In the journals he kept while in Aran he gives some beautiful pictures of the place, the people and the sea—beautiful and arresting and painted with utter simplicity of language. ‘Every article in these islands has an almost personal character, which gives this simple life, where all art is unknown, something of the artistic beauty of mediæval life. The curaghs and spinning wheels, the tiny wooden barrels that are still much used in the place of earthenware, the home-made cradles, churns and baskets, are all full of individuality, and being made from materials that are common here, yet to some extent peculiar to the island, they seem to exist as a natural link between the people and the world that is about them.

The simplicity and unity of the dress increases in another way the local air of beauty. The women wear red petticoats and jackets of the island wool stained with madder, to which they usually add a plaid shawl twisted round their chests and tied at the back. When it rains they throw another petticoat over their heads, with the waistband round their faces, or, if they are young, they use a heavy shawl like those worn in Galway. Occasionally other wraps are worn, and during the thunderstorm I arrived in I saw several girls with men’s waistcoats buttoned round their bodies.’<sup>1</sup>

His pictures of the people are equally fascinating. ‘She was rocking herself on a stool in the chimney corner beside a pot of indigo, in which she was dyeing wool, and several times when the young man finished a poem she took it up again and recited the verses with exquisite musical intonation, putting a wistfulness and passion into her voice that seemed to give it all the cadences that are sought in the profoundest poetry. The lamp had burned low, and another terrible gale was howling and shrieking over the island. It seemed like a dream that I should be sitting here among these men and women, listening to this rude and beautiful poetry that is filled with the oldest passions of the world.’<sup>2</sup>

The ideas of *crime* on the islands are original and quaint. ‘If a man has killed his father and is already sick and broken with remorse, they can see no reason why he should be dragged away and killed by the law. Such a man, they say, will be quiet all the rest of his life, and if you suggest that punishment is needed

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 16–17 (*The Aran Islands*).

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 4, 57, 102 (*The Aran Islands*); pp. 100, 45.

as an example, they ask, "Would any one kill his father if he was able to help it?"<sup>1</sup>

So much for the place and people from whom Synge got his material. Synge wrote six plays—one of them incomplete, two of them very short, and none long enough to fill an ordinary stage. They are:

The Shadow in the Glen.  
The Tinker's Wedding.  
The Riders to the Sea.  
The Play Boy of the Western World.  
The Well of the Saints.  
Dierdre of the Sorrows.

On these he has established a reputation which was high at his death and has grown since and seems as likely to be permanent as that of any man of his generation. It has been claimed for him that he is the greatest imaginative dramatist who has written in English since Shakespeare. This claim may not be as big as at first appears; it depends of course on what one seeks for in the theatre. Synge had very definite views on this, he says:

'On the stage one must have reality and one must have joy, and that is why the intellectual modern drama has failed and why people have grown sick of the false joy of the musical comedy that has been given them in place of the rich joy, only found in what is superb and wild in reality. In a good play every speech should be as fully flavoured as nut or apple, and such cannot be written by any one who works among people who have shut their lips on poetry.'

He had no sympathy with the drama which concerns itself with the problems incidental to modern conditions, and his definition of art might have been Gissing's, 'The expression, satisfying and abiding, of the zest of life.' Particularly if we substitute 'joy' for 'zest.'

He found in the Aran Islands and Connemara and Wicklow a peasantry which was perfect material for drama, as he had come to believe in it, so that it should be human and beautiful. In this people the god and the beast are curiously mixed.

Listen to this lyric speech of Mary Byrne, an old drunken tinker, in 'The Tinker's Wedding.' 'It's a sweet tongue you have, Sarah Casey; but if sleep's a grand thing, it's a grand thing to be waking up a day the like of this, when there's a

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 77, 78, 79 (*The Aran Islands*).

warm sun in it, and a kind air, and you'll hear the cuckoos singing and crying out on the top of the hills.'

Tramps have a large place in three of Synge's plays. Finding them a little richer in their common life than the ordinary man, he made them a little richer still than he had found them. 'In all the circumstances of tramp life,' he says, 'there is a certain wildness that gives it romance and a peculiar value for those who look at life in Ireland, with an eye that is aware of the arts also.' He found the English of these people, whose proper speech is Gaelic, a simple yet dignified language, and these qualities of simplicity and dignity, rhythm and delicacy and a certain unusualness, are the qualities of Synge's prose. Nevertheless he did not accept the folk-language in the bulk; he bettered what was already good, by careful selection and blending.

For example: 'Listen to what I'm telling you: a man who is not married is no better than an old jackass. He goes into his sister's house and into his brother's house; he eats a bit in this place and a bit in another place, but he has no home for himself; like an old jackass straying on the rocks.'

This is vivid in the original, but in the play it becomes, 'What's a single man, I ask you, eating a bit in one house and drinking a sup in another, like an old braying jackass strayed upon the rocks.' The idea is the same but the rambling original is pruned down without sacrificing any of its picturesqueness. Character, situation and language he thus borrowed from actual life improving and embellishing them but never altering their essence.

'The Tinker's Wedding' is the lightest-hearted of Synge's plays. It is the joyous story of how three tinkers outwitted a priest. The mixture of the sordid and the imaginative strikes one particularly in the play, especially in the character of the drunken old tinker, Mary Byrne.

*Mary.* That's right now, your reverence, and the blessing of God be on you. Isn't a grand thing to see you sitting down, with no pride in you, and drinking a sup with the like of us, and we the poorest, wretched, starving creatures you'd see any place on the earth? . . . Let you rouse up now, if it's a poor single man you are itself and I'll be singing you songs unto the dawn of day.'

*Priest* (interrupting her). What is it I want with your songs when it'd be better for the like of you, that'll soon die, to be down on your two knees saying prayers to the Almighty God?

*Mary.* If it's prayers I want, you'd have a right to say one yourself, holy father; for we don't have them at all, and I've heard tell a power of times it's that you're for. Say one now, your reverence; for I've heard a power of queer things while walking the world, but it's one thing I never heard any time, and that's a real priest saying a prayer.

*Priest.* The Lord protect us.

*Mary.* It's no lie, holy father. I often heard the rural people making a queer noise, and then going to rest; but who'd mind the like of them? And I'm thinking it would be great game to hear a scholar, the like of you, speaking Latin to the Saints above.

*Priest* (scandalised). Stop your talking, Mary Byrne; you're an old, flagrant heathen, and I'll stay no more with the lot of you. (He rises.)

*Mary* (catching hold of him). Stop till you say a prayer, your reverence; stop till you say a little prayer, I'm telling you, and I'll give you my blessing and the last sup from the jug.

'The Well of the Saints' has a supernatural element, and is, perhaps, for this reason, less interesting than the others. Two blind beggars, old and ugly, man and wife, have been told that they are the most beautiful woman and handsomest man to be seen thereabouts. A saint restores their sight with holy water, but their gratitude is turned to rage when they learn their real condition. In the end their blindness returns, but their illusion is gone for ever.

The 'Play Boy' is the play which has aroused the greatest criticism and talk. Indeed, in America, it was forbidden production. A too hasty reading of the play, I imagine, and a lack of humour along with a blindness of psychology and art led to the play being censored.

The story is as follows: Christy Mahon comes into Michael James' shebeen a stranger and fugitive. This excites the interest of imaginative folk and flattered by their curiosity Christy gradually tells his tale. He tells how in a moment of rage he has killed his father and is now fleeing from justice. 'He was a dirty man, God forgive him, and he was getting old and crusty the way I can't put up with him any longer.' This is the reason he gives for his boasted crime. Being a coward and braggart but endowed with a fatal gift of words, he adds some heroic detail with every telling of his story. The sudden appearance of



Christy's murdered father in the flesh spoils the effect of the now highly ornamental and heroic tale, but the boy, to justify his story, attempts the deed he has boasted of having done so well.

'The Shadow in the Glen' is a quaint tale of a peasant who pretends to be dead to test his wife, and is founded on a story he was told in the Aran Islands. The whole situation is full of grim humour. Here, again, we notice the touches of lyric beauty in the talk of the tramps and peasants.

*Tramp* (going over to Nora). We'll be going now, lady of the house; the rain is falling but the air is kind, and make it'll be a grand morning, by the grace of God.

*Nora*. What good is a grand morning when I'm destroyed surely, and I'm going out to get my death walking the roads.

*Tramp*. You'll not be getting your death with myself, lady of the house, and I knowing all the ways a man can put food in his mouth. . . . We'll be going now, I'm telling you, and the time you'll be feeling the cold, and the frost and the great rain, and the sun again and the south wind blowing in the glens, you'll not be sitting upon a wet ditch, the way you're after sitting in this place, making yourself old with looking at each day and it passing by you. You'll be saying one time, 'It's a grand evening by the grace of God,' and another time, 'It's a wild night, God help us; but it'll pass surely.'

Lastly, we come to the 'Riders to the Sea.' Small in scale, it is almost perfect in form and makes criticism of it impossible. It grips the imagination, speaks to the very heart of you, and leaves you possessed utterly by the haunting beauty of it. It is the most imaginative and most passionate of all Synge's works, yet as true as any to the life he was seeking to express. All the terror of life in the rocky islands, all the mystery and cruelty of the sea are in it, and the paganism which so often arise from these, and the fatalism which combines the Almighty merciful Father with the blind and arbitrary gods.

Synge once said: 'The maternal feeling in these islands is so strong that it gives a life of torment to the women.' This play is his commentary on it. Here is the mother's cry when the last of her six sons rides down to the sea that has destroyed the rest:

'If it was a hundred horses or a thousand horses you had itself, what is the price of a thousand horses against a son where there is one son only.'

The hardness that comes when life is at everlasting and hopeless war with the elements is in the expostulation of the daughter



when the mother suggests trying to prevent the son going on the sea.

‘It’s the life of a young man to be going on the sea, and who would listen to an old woman with one thing and she saying it over.’ And the bitterness of futile revolt is in the mother’s complaint, ‘In the big world the old people do be leaving things after them for their sons and children, but in this place it is the young men do be leaving things behind for them that do be old.’

But the tragedy of the old woman’s revolt is as nothing to the tragedy of her resignation when the tale of her loss is complete:

‘They’re all gone now, and there isn’t anything the sea can do to me. I’ll have no call now to be up crying and praying when the wind breaks from the south, and you can hear the surf is in the east, and the surf is in the west, making a great stir with the two noises, and they hitting one on the other. I’ll have no call now to be going down and getting Holy Water in the dark nights after Samhain, and I won’t care what way the sea is when the other women will be keening.’ As a description of the sea merely it is superb.

But she says: ‘Bartley will be lost now, and let you call in Eamon and make me a good coffin out of the white boards for I won’t live after them. I’ve had a husband and a husband’s father and six sons in this house—six fine men though it was a hard birth I had with every one of them, and they coming to the world—and some of them were found and some of them were not found, but they’re gone now the lot of them . . . There were Stephen and Shawn were lost in the great wind, and found after in the Bay of Gregory of the Golden Mouth, and carried up the two of them on one plank and in by that door . . . There was Sheamus and his father and his own father again were lost in a dark night, and not a stick or sign was seen of them when the sun went up. There was Patch after was drowned out of a curragh that was turned over. I was sitting here with Bartley, and he a baby lying on my two knees, and I seen two women, and three women, and four women coming in, and they crossed themselves and not saying a word. I looked out then and there were men coming after them, and they holding a thing in the half of a red sail, and water dripping out of it—it was a dry day, Nora—and leaving a track to the door.

The son’s body is brought home and the old mother thus addresses him. ‘It isn’t that I haven’t prayed for you, Bartley, to the Almighty God. It isn’t that I haven’t said prayers in the

dark night till you wouldn't know what I'd be saying ; but it's a great rest I'll have now, and it's time surely. It's a great rest I'll have now, and great sleeping in the long nights after Samhain, if it's only a bit of wet flour we do have to eat, and may be a fish that would be stinking.

Finally she end by this prayer. ' They're all together this time, and the end is come. May the Almighty God have mercy on Bartley's soul, and on Michael's soul, and on the souls of Sheamus and Patch, and Stephen and Shawn (bending her head) ; and may He have mercy on my soul, *Nora*, and on the soul of every one is left living in the world.'

## THE RENAISSANCE IN ITALY

By Rev. J. C. Matthew, B.D., Poona

**I**T is proper to speak of the Renaissance as having taken place only in Italy. The movement which affected the northern nations had its origin in Italy; and with them it was not a Renaissance or a second birth, but their first awakening to life.

The old Roman Empire died of heart-failure. The overgrown body put too great a strain upon Rome, the centre of administration. The machinery of government was in excellent working order. No better system of bureaucracy has been devised than that associated with Diocletian. But motive force was ebbing. The Emperors were seldom capable and the corruption of their officials drained finances. The provinces were robbed to enrich Rome, which in return gave little or nothing in the way of justice or protection. Gradually the outlying portions of the Empire fell away. After the centre of Government was removed to Constantinople, Italy, unable to defend herself, fell a prey to the northern barbarians. The dark ages may be said to commence with the capture of Rome by Alaric in 410. For many years the animation of Italy was suspended.

When we treat of the Renaissance, we find difficulty in determining not only when it began, but what it really was. Some say that it consists in the revival of learning and that this was brought about largely by the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the subsequent scattering of scholars over Europe. But the rebirth of Italy had been accomplished before this, and it was not an intellectual movement. The revival of learning was its consequence, not its cause.

That Italy slowly came to life again, after the suspended animation of the dark ages, was due to improved social and economic conditions. The barbarians who poured down from the north were absorbed. They had not only re-peopled the country, but fresh blood had strengthened the exhausted body

politic. One language was being formed for the whole peninsula, and Italy was prepared to take her place once more as the distributing centre of the commerce of Europe.

Italy in Roman times had reached its greatest internal unity and strength before the second war with Carthage 218-201 B.C. The solidarity of the mingled races in the Peninsula is brought out in resisting the invasion of Hannibal. The long and deadly struggle with Carthage also lets us see what it was that united Italy and held it together. Commerce was moving westwards with the enlargement of sea-going ships. Tyre had gone down before Greece, and Carthage (New Tyre) had surpassed her former successful rival. Then Rome from the opposite coast of the Mediterranean, entered into competition and by successful war gained the monopoly. Because of the position which Italy occupied, a long peninsula running down into the Mediterranean from the centre of Europe, it was fitted to be the distributor of Eastern merchandize to the northern nations.

Even during the dark ages Italy did not completely give up its trade with the East. As early as the seventh century the merchants of Amalfi had a settlement in Constantinople. But the trade was scanty. It was confined to the small harbours of Amalfi, Gæta and Basi, the ships not venturing up the Adriatic or along the no less dangerous western coast. There could not indeed be much demand for goods till the wanderings of the people were over and the nations had settled down within their borders. Then with the improvement in shipping Venice and Genoa become the great receiving ports. Florence becomes the centre of manufactures, importing its raw materials from Pisa.

By the beginning of the eleventh century wealth was pouring into the country. Towns spring up and rise into importance along all the trade routes. Especially is this remarkable in Italy between Venice and Genoa. The trade of Europe passed through here. Milan, where the roads for Florence, Venice, Genoa, united to pass over the Alps by Como, became a great city. Italy as a whole prospered; but Lombardy and Tuscany made the most of the Revival of Commerce.

The birth of Italy was announced to the world by its triumphant war with Carthage. Its rebirth is signalized by the successful resistance which the Lombard cities, led by Milan, made to the Emperor Frederick I, Barbarossa. We know how the Pope had called in Charles the Great, in the year 800, to deliver Italy from the Lombard barbarians. Since then—the emperor—



usually a German—had considered himself the overlord of the Peninsula. Now, however, these same Lombards regard Frederick as a barbarian, and object to pay him the feudal tribute which he demanded. In 1167 a league of sixteen cities was formed to resist the drain upon the country. Frederick was defeated at the battle of Legnano in 1176, and the following year, by the treaty of Venice, confirmed all the privileges of the cities of Lombardy.

The period called the Renaissance lies between this date and the invasion of the French king Charles VIII in 1495. The weakness of the resistance then made by Italy showed that the force of the Government had spent itself. After the sack of Rome in 1527, another dark age settled down upon the peninsula.

The spirit stirring in Italy during the period of the Renaissance is best studied in the popular tales of the novelists. Of these we have the 'Cento Novelle', a collection of stories which belong, for the most part, to the thirteenth century, the Decameron of Boccaccio 1375 and the stories of Sacchetti 1400 and Bandello 1562. The genius of these authors has given us a true and faithful picture of the social and domestic life of their times. They alone let us see that there was one and the same spirit moving in all classes of society and that was 'the joy of living.'

It is true that these tales have often been called immoral. It is more correct to say they were unmoral. Every man did what he was able to do without considering whether it was right or wrong. The country was prosperous and every one had money to spend. There was the delight of health restored after long illness, the joy of a holiday following upon irksome restraint. Rabelais made only one rule binding upon his imaginary order of Thelemites, and that was 'Do what thou wilt.' 'Do what you will' was also the motto of the Renaissance in Italy.

This 'joy of living' animated Italy right through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Visitors from the North were astonished at the comfort with which the people were housed, the elegance of their furniture, and the richness of their clothing. On the other hand Aeneas Sybirus, when he travelled beyond the Alps on Papal business, described in most incomplimentary terms the manners and customs of the countries he visited. The genial climate of Italy saved its people from the sottishness of the northern nations. There is breeziness about the way in which Italians enjoyed themselves. They loved to surround themselves with things beautiful. A villa and a garden laid out with exquisite taste, was almost a necessity with a wealthy merchant.

He would retire thither for a time from the city and gather round him poets, singers, and men of literature. In this way not only literature, but art was fostered. For the owners of great houses contended with one another in gathering distinguished men about them, and all were anxious to securing specimens of their artistic work. It is perhaps wrong to say that the Italians have ever possessed a special genius for painting. The production of pictures, more than any other art depends upon the money market Renaissance Italy has left to Europe unsurpassed examples of the painter's work, because the men who could produce them were well paid to do so.

Nor was the appreciation of beautiful things confined to wealthy patrons of art. We read that when Ciriaco's Madonna—considered a wonder of painting—was conveyed to its resting place in Sta Maria Novella, the whole populace turned out to do honour to the artist. In Florence, it was found necessary to pass laws against luxury in dress, and the 'bonfire of vanities', which followed on the preaching of Savonarola shews how the people were still adorning themselves. On the occasion of festivals—which were very frequent—the cities were decorated not only with splendour but with taste; while the pageants exhibited testified alike to the liberality of donors and the skill of the actors and managers. The spirit of the Renaissance in Italy was frankly pagan. Poliziano, a poet of Florence 1494, expresses this perhaps better than any one: 'When the rose expands its petals, when it is most lovely and sweetest, then it is well to bind it in a garland before its beauty passes: So, my youthful companions, pluck the rose of the garden of life while still full-blown.'

It has been often said that interest in the art and literature of antiquity brought about the Renaissance. On the contrary, the Renaissance revived interest in antiquity. The Italians of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries felt that they were one in spirit with the pagan Rome. They had the same appreciation of the joy and brightness of the outer world, the same sense of the shortness of life. The long night of the dark ages was forgotten in the delight of renewed day. Hence the general desire to revive the art and literature of classical times. Anything of modern origin was despised. The pointed arch in architecture, which had been finding favour, was condemned as 'Gothic', Petrarch said that any merit which Dante's Divine Comedy possessed was lost through being written in the vulgar tongue

instead of in Latin. It was the age of the Humanists; and this name even itself given to scholars shows how classical literature was appreciated. Medieval Italians and ancient Greeks and Romans met on the common ground of human nature.

Italy woke to a new day in the Renaissance and resolved to make the most of it. The strong man found his opportunity. Socially as well as politically, and in literature and art, the limits were undetermined and the possibilities unexhausted. Like a great flood the northern barbarians had poured down and covered the peninsula. Now the overflow was shrinking into pools and Italy was divided up into a multitude of small states, communes and free cities. It was the age of the despots, when a strong man could, by force or fraud, make himself a prince and a ruler, and having established himself make the government hereditary in his family. Thus there were the Viscount ruling in Milan, the Malatesta in Rimini, the Este in Ferrara and many others. Most remarkable of the Medici, who as prosperous merchants controlled the destinies of Florence for many generations.

Not infrequent these despots were patrons of literature and art. They liked to have poets and literary men at their courts. Lorenzo dei Medici was himself no mean versifier. But the greatest service they rendered to their own time and to the future was in the collection of MSS and objects of art. Not only was Italy systematically searched—its libraries ransacked for books and its soil trenched for sculptures—but commissaries were despatched to Constantinople and the East. When the original MS could not be obtained, a copy was made, and in this way many a work in literature has been saved, which would otherwise have perished. The Laurentian Library at Florence is the most remarkable of these collections, and the great library at Vatican is in part the amalgamations of the collections made by the despots.

Many of these strong men used their power wisely, and sought the good to the people under their control. Italy owes much to them. The beauty and interest of its cities centre round the public buildings and churches which rose under their patronage. But it is also true that at no time does the 'human brute' appear more horrible and unashamed than in Italy of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Ezzelino da Romano, whom Dante saw in the Inferno, plunged to the lips in boiling blood, belonged to a former age. But there were strong men in the Renaissance who gained



their selfish ends by methods no less cruel in more refined. Francesco Sporza—the peasant with the strong arm—who became a leader of mercenary soldiers and established himself as Duke of Milan, and whose family left untried no crime by which they could maintain supremacy. Cesare Borgia, carving out for himself a Dukedom. In Romagna, by every act of duplicity, by violence, and secret assassination. Such men despised no means by which they might gain their ends. They knew neither pity nor self-restraint. The word ‘virtue’, which is applied to them in the histories of the time has nothing to do with morality. It but expresses the energy with which they could force their way to the end they had in view.

The novelists show that lack of restraint infected all classes of society. It would be wrong however to conclude that profligacy was general, and that all the men were murdered and all the women unchaste. The writers of the romances no doubt adapted their material to the taste of the reading public. There was undoubtedly a strong element of burgher respectability. Pendolfini, who was not a novelist gives us a charming picture of the home and family life at Florence in the latter half of the fourteenth century. Castiglione in depicting court life at Urbino reaches a very high ideal of knightly honour. Even the novelists now and then give noble types of character in both sexes. The women of rank and fortune were more sinned against than sinning. The worst of them are found in Naples; but they were foreigners. Italian women were often highly educated and when they had opportunities showed they were capable of great things. Catarina Sforza when her husband had been killed, defended against the army of the Pope, and obtained the honourable name of ‘virago’. Even Lucezia Borgia, as duchess of Ferrara, commanded the love and esteem of her husband’s subjects. Isabella d’Este, duchess of Mantua, embodies the purest spirit of the Renaissance. An accomplished classical scholar, she extended her patronage to men of literature, and her collection of paintings and art was one of the best in Italy.

The Renaissance in Italy may be described as ‘unmoral’. In the joy of living every man did what was right in his eyes without calculating the consequences. Instructive in this respect is the attitude of the people generally towards religion. The church had been the nurse of Italy through the dark ages. It had protected the terrified people against the barbarians. Pope Leo had turned back the Huns from the gates of Rome. The



Head of the Church brought in Charles the Great to restrain the Lombards. The mysterious power which emanated from Rome held Europe in awe, and the successor of Peter could bend kings and emperors to his will. In the Renaissance the Italian nobles made war upon the Pope and plundered the states of the church. The novelists ridiculed the clergy. We would gladly believe that half of what they say about the morals of the priests is untrue. The people openly made a mock of sacred things. And yet one and all they clung tenaciously to the forms of religion, and never dreamt of reforming the church as the more serious northern nations did later. Along with the unrestrained joy of living—and perhaps fostered by it—there was a deep undercurrent of superstition. Italy was pagan as it had ever been but the medieval Italians were without the old Roman's courage in the face of death. They had no use for religion in this life, but they feared to enter the future without the aid of the church. The men who administered the sacraments they utterly despised ; but there might be something in the sacraments themselves, and they endeavoured at all costs to have them. When Vitellozzo, a man guilty of the basest crimes, was treacherously seized by Cesare Borgia and was about to be put to death, he begged of his murderers that he would obtain from Pope Alexander VI absolution for his sons. There could be no better comment upon the spirit of the Renaissance in Italy. The strong man shrank from doing nothing by which he could increase his joy in living. He would pay any price to any one who could relieve the pain of dying.

The Renaissance spirit took hold of Italy most strongly between 1305 and 1417. This was the period of the transfer of the Papacy to Avignon, the Great Schism. The revived interest in Pagan antiquities and literature was led by Petrarch. The respect paid to him was extraordinary, and culminated in his coronation as poet, in the capital. It was largely the result of his influence that Cola di Rienzo, a man of humble birth, attempted to revive the government of Republican Rome.

When the Pope, Martin V, returned from Avignon, he found a new Italy, which was trying to be old. He probably could not have suppressed the classical revival, had he wished. But he took the wisest course and assumed the leadership of the movement. It is largely to him that we owe the Vatican Library. Not only did he collect all the manuscripts he could find, but he had copies made where the original was not obtainable. Several of

his successors are conspicuous, not only for their care of the ancient monuments, their collections of objects of art and their preservation of inscriptions, but also for their contributions to literature. Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pius II) has left delightful descriptions of the people he knew and the countries he visited. Perhaps more than any other, Julius II embodies the best spirit of the Renaissance, although he has not received his due. When we speak of the age of Leo as marking the flood-level of the Renaissance, we are giving him credit for what Julius II had done. Not only could this warrior Pope appreciate the art of Ancient Rome, but he knew the value of the art of his own time. He was the patron of Raphaelo and Michael Angelo.

The clergy were drawn along with the joy of living as were the rest of the people. When the novelists satirise the ministers of religion, they point them out as being like every one else. The crimes and obscenities attributed to Borgia (Pope Alexander VI) are found, under examination, to be largely the exaggeration of partisans. A man exceptionally fine in physical appearance, with perfect health, maintained perhaps by his abstemiousness in food and drink, so ignorant of his duties of his office that he could not perform its sacred functions without a prompter, he is the embodiment of the strong man, asserting himself, and thus in some ways the most typical figure of the Italian Renaissance. It never seemed to occur to him that he could be under any restraint. He obtained by bribery and corruption the foremost place in Italy and made the most of it. He knew no sense of shame. He never calculated consequences. His enjoyment of life was wholly pagan. Beside him the figure of Leo X, of whom the remark is quoted, 'God has given us the Papacy, therefore let us enjoy it'—fades into insignificance.

I have tried to show that the Renaissance was due to the revival of Commerce. The revival of learning and the patronage of art were the accompaniments of financial prosperity. Scholars and painters found a demand for their work, and they gave of their best. It is true the Renaissance produced nothing to equal the Divine Comedy. That was because the supply was according to the demand. The men of Ariosto's time did not take life so seriously as in the days of Dante. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, present life offered abundant material enjoyment and there was no use for visions. Much of the literature then produced has fallen into oblivion, and the world is none the poorer.

The Renaissance in Italy did much for the arts—painting, sculpture, and architecture—than for literature. The humanists, catering for pagan taste—tried to revive the language as well as the sentiments of ancient Rome. The result is at best a feeble imitation. The artists introduced something new. It is true that most of their subjects are still traditional, taken from the lives of the saints of the Holy Scriptures. But they breathed into their pictures the new spirit. Their figures have life. They joyfully assert their individuality, like the men and women of the time, some of whom, in fact, sat to them as models. The encouragement of portrait painting was characteristic of their time, and some of the work which remains has never been surpassed. The despots and the wealthy merchants vied with one another for the services of a well-known artist to immortalize their own features and those of their wives and families. Even Charles V stooped to pick up a brush which Tiziano let fall.

In art as well as in political and social life the strong man asserted himself. There were giants in those days, and they were as self-willed and overbearing as the men who employed them. Leonardo da Vinci would only work when it pleased him and, when urged to complete his great resco of the Last Supper he threatened to paint the prior as Judas. Benvenuto Cellini's work in silver still excites the admiration of Europe. More wonderful, perhaps, is his autobiography. Never was a more unashamed confession of every form of wickedness given to the public. Its author takes his place alongside Alexander Borgia as one of the most typical figures of the Renaissance. But the greatest all-round genius was Michael Angelo, who has expressed his individuality alike in sculpture, painting, architecture and poetry. He worked upon ancient models, but he had inspired them in the fullest measure with his own spirit, which is also the spirit of his times, but something more.

‘Everything that has an origin carries in it the germ of decay.’ The Renaissance movement in Italy set out with the assertion of the joy of living. The strong man made the most of his opportunities, heedless of present or future consequences. Politically, the result was disastrous. Italy, which through the dark ages, had been slowly amalgamating its northern immigrants, was again split up into a multitude of rival principalities. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are pitiful records of the conflicts of one state against another, or of the parties within

the communes, struggling for the upper hand. In the midst of this confusion, the church which had nursed Italy back to life, was always watching its opportunity for aggrandisement. Being itself without military power, it would call in the forces of German Emperor or French King to devastate the country for the supposed interest of religion. The unopposed expedition of Charles VIII in 1494 shows how the selfish policy of the states kept them from uniting. The spirit of the Renaissance was now working death, when Charles V came with his Spaniards. Italy was moribund. Failure of Italy through lack of earnestness—decay of literature. Want of religion did not lead to Reformation of the church. Hence the vengeance of the church when it regained its power.

The prosperity of Italy indeed came to an end with the movement of commerce westwards. The enlargement of seagoing ships had enabled Christopher Columbus—an Italian of Genoa—to discover America for the Spanish. In 1498 Vasco de Gama opened the sea route to India and the Far East. Italy was to be no longer the distributing centre for Europe. Charles V, and with him the Inquisition, crushed the last spark of life out of the country he conquered. But before his coming commercial ruin had overtaken Italy, when the Spanish peninsula became the market of Europe for the sale of Eastern merchandize.



## THE HOLY GRAIL

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THE Holy Grail or flagon was the cup from which our Lord and His disciples drank of the Last Supper. The tradition was that it was brought by Joseph of Arimathaea to Glastonbury in England. It had the magical power that whoever could touch it or see it was 'heal'd at once, by faith, of all his ills.' In later degenerate days as a punishment God took away the cup from the world; but the memory of it remained, and when King Arthur founded his Order of the Knights of the Round Table men hoped that now at last in a worthier world God would give them back the magic healing cup. In this poem Tennyson tells the tale of the search for the Grail. It is based on various legends, but the story as it stands is Tennyson's own.

Professor A. C. Bradley has told of the disappointment of the contemporaries of his youth when first the suspicion arose that the 'Idylls of the King,' with their magic of song and imagery and story, were in some measure allegorical. Yet how could it be otherwise with tales of a king 'in whom high God hath breathed a secret thing', and his knights, 'like to coins, some true, some light, but every one of' them 'stamped with the image of the King'? When we count up the gains and the losses of war, we shall not forget to reckon in the myriads of jaded fighters against wrong those whose courage has revived and who have struck doughtier blows when they thought of themselves as Christian Knights, in whom all faltering is disloyalty and shame. It might be too much to say that in the 'Holy Grail' Tennyson forgets the story in the allegory; it is not too much to say that the story is an allegory; it is a study of asceticism.

Yet the story itself is so captivating, the many-sided teaching is so deftly interwoven into the narrative, that we are left wondering at Tennyson the poet with no feeling of resentment against Tennyson the moralist. There is a message first of all

for the one talent men and women, or, shall we say rather, the two-talent men and women; for those of us who realize that in the great battle of life our qualities fit us only to take our place among the rank and file. One evening when the banquet was spread in the great hall, Galahad sat down in the chair fashioned by the magician Merlin, the chair of the 'self-losing' that meant 'self-saving'. Suddenly the roof was rent; there was a burst of thunder overhead; and in a long beam of blinding light the Grail appeared. But only one night, Galahad himself, a character created by Tennyson as an ideal of spotless purity, saw the Grail. The other knights swore that they would ride for a twelve-month and a day till they too saw. King Arthur was away at the time; and when he returned and heard the story of his knights' rash vow, his brow grew dark. But it was too late.

Away went the knights on their self-imposed errand; and at the year's end they returned, or rather a handful of them returned; and Bors and Percivale had seen the Grail, and 'leaving human wrongs to right themselves,' left Arthur's palace for the cloister; Galahad had once more seen the Grail but

Now his chair desires him here in vain,  
However they may crown him elsewhere;

and Lancelot, greatest of them all, had had a clouded vision of the Grail. But for most of them the quest was vain. They did not bring with them the capacity to see the Grail and so they did not see it.

But all the time they were away on the vain quest, men and women were coming to the palace for redress against wrong, for help against tyranny and cruelty; and the men who could have helped them and should have helped them were not there. They had abandoned the task their king had given them for a task of their own seeking they had no power to accomplish. They had neglected their own humbler talents to try to secure the fruit of their neighbours' richer talents. But in the parable the man with the one talent was not blamed because he could not produce the fruit of five talents or of two. Have we not often found ourselves saying: 'If only I had better health or more money or a better education or a higher social position, how much more useful I could be!' But if we have not the eyes of Galahad or even of Percivale, the king will not expect us to see the visions that Galahad and Percivale can see.

The vision sought was the vision of a cup which to those who saw it most clearly was 'rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,' a cup which in Tennyson's rendering of the story could never be dissociated from the thought of the blood of Him who could not save Himself since He would save others. Yet it was only a vision, with that element of unhealthiness which is inseparable from visions. The quest for the sight of the Grail was the beginning of the end of the Order of the Knights of the Round Table. The pious old monk, by whom the story of the Quest is told, remarks that he has often read of miracles and marvels like this, but as he reads them his 'head swims' and for relief he goes down to the little village of which he is pastor and shepherds his flock in their simple joys and sorrows. But to one who has entered on the quest for sight of the Grail, the men and women of real life count for nothing: they are 'as phantoms.' Men will look for the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven when they will not look for Him coming in the lanes and squares of earth. It is in the decadence of religion, Tennyson teaches us, that men see portents and 'miracles and marvels.'

Tennyson distinguishes sharply between the vision which is the end of the quest, and the means by which alone the vision can be achieved. 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' The sight of the Grail is for those only whose hearts are white as snow. At this point the allegory seems at first sight to halt. Tennyson clearly means us to understand that all the knights save a chosen few had no right to think that they could see the Grail; in joining in the quest they were deserting their posts. Are we then to understand that there is an aristocracy of purity as well as an aristocracy of birth or intellect or money? That it is as much our duty to be content with the purity we have as with our social station? Clearly he does not mean this. He is using the word, not in its New Testament sense of single-heartedness or sincerity, but in its romantic sense of freedom from or mastery over sexual desire. The poem then gives us Tennyson's philosophy of asceticism.

The main lesson of the poem, that asceticism is as false in theory as it is mischievous in practice, is brought into the stronger relief that Tennyson feels the spell of the ideal. The Baptist owed his power as a preacher partly to the fact that he was not clothed in soft raiment but ate the desert food and wore the desert clothing. Tennyson was too much of an artist, too stern

a moralist, to feel no sympathy with those who fast and pray till the sun shines and the wind blows through them, and it seems as though they might rise and float. When Percivale's sister, the nun of 'all but utter whiteness', came to tell her brother that she had seen the Grail, her eyes were

Beyond my knowing of them, beautiful,  
Beyond all knowing of them, wonderful,  
Beautiful in the light of holiness.

There was power too in the vision as there was power in the asceticism of the Baptist. At the last great journey before the knights went off on their quest, Percivale and Galahad were endued with superhuman strength.

And I myself and Galahad, for a strength  
Was in us from the vision, overthrew  
So many knights that all the people cried  
And almost burst the barriers in their heat,  
Shouting, 'Sir Galahad and Sir Percivale.'

And later, when Galahad had the Grail with him as a continual presence, he rode in the strength of the vision

Shattering all evil customs everywhere.

Tennyson was no doctrinaire. He knew what our Lord has taught us, that there are those for whom it is right to renounce home joys for the sake of the Kingdom of God. But the central idea of asceticism, the contemptuous conception of woman as the root of all evil, is anathema to the pure-minded and chivalrous poet. In the story as Tennyson tells it, the first to see the Grail is a woman, Percivale's sister. It is she who is the inspirer of the whole quest. It is to her that Galahad, the personification of male virginity, owes the fervour of his devotion; for she plaited a sword-belt of her hair, bound it round him, and

sent the deathless passion in her eyes  
Through him, and made him hers, and laid her mind  
On him, and he believed in her belief.

Yet for Percivale's nameless sister, the life of the cloisters was but a second-best, adopted only after 'a fervent flame of human love' in her earlier maidenhood had been 'rudely blunted'. And there is this subtle point also, that for her the ecstatic rapture of the vision led to no tender works of charity. Its sole result was that general quest for the Grail which disorganized and all but destroyed the beneficent Order of the Round Table,



Even in the few cases where the quest is crowned with success and where it strengthens men in their fight against evil, Tennyson puts it against the background of the humble old monk, whose highest ambition was to be the faithful shepherd of the simple sheep in his little thorpe, knowing 'every homely secret in their hearts,' 'lulling random squabbles when they rise,' rejoicing 'even in their hens and in their eggs.' It is King Arthur at the end of the poem who gives us Tennyson's verdict on the quest; but this simple old monk had already more than a glimmering of the truth.

He seems dimly to feel that his life of humble usefulness is better in God's sight than all the fantastic adventures of the court knights in their search for the Grail. He is at least dealing with men and women; they for the most part with 'phantoms'. For it is of the very essence of asceticism to dehumanize us in all our relations. Ambrosius knows too that there is something better than even the life of charity that he has chosen. He lives 'like an old badger in his earth, with earth about him everywhere, despite all fast and penance.' He and his brother monks are

Plagued with dreams of something sweet  
Beyond all sweetness in a life so rich.

It is Ambrosius too who sees, though in his humility he will not more than hint it, that it was Percivale's true destiny to marry his early love when he met her again in the course of his wanderings after the Grail, met her a rich and landed widow, 'all her longing and her will' toward him as of old. Her people wanted him to be their king. Had he stayed with her he would have been a second Arthur. 'Oh! the pity of it,' exclaims Ambrosius. But to give her up was not only hard; it was wrong. Asceticism flourishes in the atmosphere that believes that the pleasant is the sinful.

Why did Percivale not stay with her as his heart bade him?

It is a curiously true touch that Percivale's tragedy is due to his misinterpretation of a saying of the king. He calls to mind that King Arthur had prophesied that most of them 'would follow wandering fires.' But a life of love and usefulness such as was beckoning Percivale, King Arthur would never have called a 'wandering fire.' How many a life of tragic piety has had its origin in the misinterpretation of a text. He was moved also by that superstitious reverence for the letter of a vow, about

which moralists can hardly tell us whether it is the perversion or the glory of the virtue of truthfulness.

When the Grail appeared at Arthur's palace, the knights who were present, who knew that it had come and made their reckless vow to follow till they saw it, were in idleness. King Arthur with a band of knights was on the path of duty. They had gone to avenge an 'outraged maiden;' so they were saved from the temptation to make the vow and join in the quest. Moreover of all those who searched for and saw the Grail, while Galahad is certainly the hero of the story from the artistic point of view, perhaps Tennyson means us to feel that the search of Sir Bors was in truth the most successful. He realized the relative unimportance of the vision.

If God would send the vision, well; if not,  
The Quest and he were in the hands of Heaven.

He was hardly thinking of himself at all; his longing to see the Grail was swallowed up in his grief and love for his mad kinsman Lancelot. He would gladly forge the sight of the Cup of healing if only Lancelot might see it. When at last he is rewarded, he is not searching for the Grail at all, but is lying in prison, a martyr for his religion. And he sees it, not as Lancelot saw it, covered, and 'thro' a stormy glare,' and amid a 'heat as from a seven-times heated furnace,' but the Grail itself, 'the sweet Grail glided and past,' 'in colour like the fingers of a hand Before a burning taper.'

Asceticism is always self-conscious; and self-consciousness is but one form of selfishness. Its triumphs lead to pride. When Percivale first set out on the quest, he afterwards confessed that

I was lifted up in heart, and thought  
Of all my late-shown prowess in the lists.

Then there is a revulsion of feeling, and self-conscious pride gives place to equally self-conscious despair.

Then every evil word I had spoken once,  
And every evil thought I had thought of old,  
And every evil deed I ever did,  
Awoke and cried, 'This Quest is not for thee.'

Sometimes we forget that the true alternative to asceticism is not self-indulgence; but Tennyson does not forget. If he is not whole-hearted in his admiration for Percivale or even for his

sister, he is whole-hearted in his scorn of Gawain. The noble, disastrous adventure after the Cup of healing is set over the homely kindly life of the gentle old monk, but no less does it stand out in relief against the wantonness of Gawain.

For I was much awearied of the Quest;  
But found a silk pavilion in a field,  
And merry maidens in it.

It is characteristic of the austere purity of Tennyson that he gives us no picture of the sport of Gawain with his merry maidens. None knew better than Tennyson the difference between asceticism and austerity. We are told only that Gawain had a pleasant time, save for the storm that pays so large a part in the concluding stages of the story, by which the companions of his frolics were considerably dishevelled. Bors and Percivale and Lancelot may have seen dimly; Gawain saw not at all.

There is a place in life for vision; but the vision of God will never lead us away from our work; it will lead us into our work, give us heart and manhood for the task to which God calls us. And when the day's work is done, vision will merge in sight.

## REVIEW

### Present Day Applications of Psychology

THIS is the title of a most admirable booklet by Dr. Charles Myers of Cambridge, one of our foremost authorities on Experimental Psychology. The book consists of two lectures delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain on April 11 and 18, 1918; it is published by Messrs. Methuen at the price of one shilling net.

It is very significant that a subject of this kind should be published in a form that is fitted to appeal to the average citizen. The old Psychology is counted a branch of Philosophy, and its study is restricted to a few; but the development of education, as a separate branch of study has emphasized the fact that there is a practical interest in the study of Psychology. The amount of information set forth for the enlightenment of the student of education has been meagre enough: but with the application of experiment and observation to mental processes much useful work has been done in the measuring of the mental capacity of children and of others. Perhaps, most interesting of all is the fulfilment of the promise made by Aristotle to the fathers in the application of the study of mental processes to the divine art of healing. Now this little book is a summing up by a past master of the most recent development of this entrancing subject. Principles are set forth in a manner calculated to stimulate the desire of ordinary intelligent people, if not in a way to enlighten them fully. We commend this book to our readers, because we feel that it is just in this way fitted to stimulate the desire for a kind of knowledge that is of the first importance to all who are concerned with the cure of souls, whether of the young or of the grown up.

Dr. Myers shows how the skill of the psychologist is necessary to supplement that of the ordinary physiologist, how the trained psychologist is needed in educational institutions to measure and guide the capacities of the young, so that there shall not be waste



of energy in putting boys and girls to forms of work for which they are not suited. Educational experts have been aware of this need for many generations, but it is only in recent years, as the result of experimental psychology, that we have come to realize how industrial efficiency can be promoted by a right analysis and measurement of fatigue. This is the part of these lectures that will appeal most to the common people, for it shows some reason in the demand of the worker for shorter hours of toil. Though all men are most intimately concerned with questions of health, they are not all qualified to enter fully into questions of psychology as these bear on the art of healing: but it is most necessary that all those who are concerned with the education of the young should realize that the physician, who is only a physiologist, is insufficiently equipped for the treatment of certain forms of sickness. Dr. Myers pleads for more information to be spread among the people regarding this fact.

The practical purpose of the lectures is thus given in a concluding paragraph: 'Thus psychology in its modern form, as the study (by observation and experiment) of the normal and abnormal mind, is bound to play an increasing part alike in industry, jurisprudence, education, æsthetics and medicine. The urgent need now is for institutes of applied psychology in each of our largest cities, which may serve as centres for attacking these practical problems with the help of experts trained both in psychology and in the particular branch in which its help is needed, and with the active enlightened sympathy of the general public.'

A. R.





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